



NEWSLETTER



Big Horn County
FSA Office
May/June, 2011

**County Executive
Director:** Keshia Lind

724 West Third St.
Hardin, MT 59034

406-665-3442 phone
406-665-3916 fax
www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**County Committee
Members:**
Shawn Nedens: Chair
Ellis Murdock: ViceChair
Shawn Fredericks
Carrie Holmen: Advis
Thomas Whiteman: Advis

**Next County Committee
Meeting:**
To be announced

County Office Staff:
Katie Berkram
Jill Uffelman
Marie Weibert
Diane Schanaman
Jessica Hebdon

Agricultural Lending Opportunities

Questions regarding obtaining
credit to start or enlarge a
farming or ranching operation;
financing agricultural operating
expenses; or livestock,
machinery purchases call:

Mike Turley: 657-6135
**Bruce Johnson: 657-
6135**

Reasonable Accommodations:
Persons with disabilities who
require accommodations to attend
or participate in any FSA programs
should contact the County Executive
Director at the FSA Office or the
Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-
8339.

Heads Up

- **June 1, 2011-** Last day to turn in **2011 DCP contracts**. Remember DCP contracts have to be signed **every year** by **everyone** who has a **share in the Crop**. Producers and landowners having a share in the crop need to come into the office and fill out a **CCC-926 Adjusted Gross Income Form (AGI)**. **This form has to be filed every year in order to receive payments.**
- **July 15, 2011-** Last day to turn in 2011 Crop Reporting Maps.
- **July 29, 2011-** Last day to sign up for 2009 SURE program (Crop Disaster Program)
- **Leases-** If you had leases that expired in 2010, please bring current leases into the County Office. Remember payments cannot be made until all current leases are on file
- **Note for Disaster Programs:** We understand that it is time consuming to gather and document the information that is required for the Disaster programs, however without this information, payments cannot be made. If you have question or concerns about the Disaster programs please contact the Big Horn County Office.
- **Grasshoppers-** **Please contact the FSA office if you start noticing a loss due to grasshoppers!**

Non-active agriculture producers must "opt-in" to receive future newsletters

Effective **March 1, 2011**, the Montana Farm Service Agency has issued a new newsletter policy geared toward improving FSA newsletter delivery and efficiency to the individual farmers, ranchers and agriculture community. FSA newsletters will continue to be sent to active agriculture producers as determined by the county FSA offices. No action is needed for active producers unless your household or business is receiving duplicate newsletters in which case you should inform your local county FSA office. If you are not an "active" producer but are a landowner or are interested in receiving or continuing to receive a FSA newsletter, you must inform your local county office that you'd like to "Opt-in" and be added to the newsletter mailing list. In addition, you can choose to receive your newsletter electronically by email. Each newsletter not mailed saves the agency and taxpayer \$0.39. To request the electronic newsletter be emailed to you, please contact your county FSA office.

2011 Acreage Reports

County offices are in the process of getting the 2011 compliance map packets together for acreage reporting purposes. The compliance maps will be mailed or made available at the FSA county office for producers. Please follow the instructions closely for completing the maps to ensure that all the cropland and rangeland is reported if required for program eligibility. The deadline to file 2011 acreage reports is **July 15, 2011**.

2009 SURE Sign-Up Underway, Ends July 29

Sign-up for the SURE program for the 2009 Crop Year began on Jan. 10, 2011 and will end on **July 29, 2011**. To be eligible for SURE a producer must have at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance and a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for all economically significant crops. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage. Producers that have a farming interest physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county by the Agriculture Secretary under a Secretarial Disaster Designation or a contiguous county and meet the above criteria are eligible for SURE. (Big Horn County was designated as a primary/contiguous disaster county in 2009). Last fiscal year, FSA in Montana administered more than \$36 million in the SURE program for the 2008 crop year. In the absence of the Secretarial Disaster Designation producers may be eligible if they suffer at least a 50% production loss on the entire SURE farm due to a natural disaster. For more information, contact the county office.

2011 Prevented Planting Final Report Date

If you intended to plant crops/acres this spring and were prevented from planting due to a natural disaster, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crops/acres with FSA. Final planting dates vary by crop. If you were prevented from planting insurable crops then please check with your crop insurance agent for the applicable final planting date or if you have NAP crops that are prevented planted then please contact FSA. If a request for prevented planting is not filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date, it is considered late filed and will require a minimum of \$46 to have an on-site inspection completed to determine that the natural disaster condition was evident. If the disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted is no longer apparent, then the FSA-576 will be denied and no benefits will be applicable. If you have insured crops that were prevented planted then you may be required to provide proof that you filed for prevented planting credit with crop insurance. The COC may also request that you provide receipts or invoices showing you had inputs (seed, chemical, fertilizer, etc.) available to plant the acres claimed as prevented to establish your intent of planting. It is important that the FSA-576 be timely filed and approved for a possible 2011 crop disaster program (SURE) or for acreage history credit. Approved preventive planted acreage may also be eligible for ACRE payments.

DCP and ACRE Sign-up Deadline is June 1

Sign-up for the 2011 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment (DCP) Program and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program will continue until June 1, 2011. For DCP Enrollment, FSA urges producers to contact the County FSA office ASAP to complete their 2011 DCP contract or make use of the eDCP automated website. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2011, eligible producers may request to receive advance direct payments based on 22 percent of the direct payment. FSA began to issue advance direct payments beginning Dec. 1, 2010. The Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) Option provides a safety net based on state revenue losses and acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under DCP. A farm's payment is based on a revenue guarantee calculated using a 5-year average state yield and the most recent 2-year national price for each eligible commodity. An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. In exchange for participating in ACRE, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent. The decision to enroll in the ACRE Program is irrevocable. The owner of the farm and all producers on the farm must agree to enroll in ACRE. Once enrolled, the farm shall be enrolled for that initial crop year and will remain in ACRE through the 2012 crop year. Visit www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp or contact this office for additional information on the ACRE Program.

Livestock Indemnity Program

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible livestock owners and contract growers for eligible livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather including losses due to floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat, and extreme cold. For 2011 losses, producers must file a notice of loss the earlier of either 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock was apparent to the participant or October 31, 2011. A notice of loss can be reported to the office by phone, fax, or e-mail. To be considered eligible, livestock deaths must have died before October 1, 2011, and in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested. An Application for Payment may be filed at any time in 2011, but must be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss of livestock occurred. Please contact the office for additional eligibility requirements. A list of eligible livestock is available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt

Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election

Below is a nomination form for the 2011 County Committee Election that will be held in early November to Dec. 5, 2011. Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. This year, a producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1. Duties of county committee members include administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office, informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs, keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions, monitoring changes in farm programs, participating in county meetings as necessary and performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee. Completed and signed form(s) must be delivered to the FSA County Office or postmarked no later than **Aug. 1**. Questions: call or visit county office. (LAA 1 is everything west of the Big Horn River)

FSA-669A (03-31-11) Page 2		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency		Form Approved - OMB No. 0560-0229	
NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION					
1. NAME OF NOMINEE (Type or Print Nominee's Full Name)			TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE		
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE			4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED		
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION: <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee. <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.			5. COUNTY		
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE			6. LAA		7. STATE
3B. DATE			8. NOMINATOR'S CERTIFICATION: <i>If this nomination is by other than self, the following eligible voter or representative of a community based organization hereby nominates the afore-named person to be a candidate in the next County FSA Committee election for the county.</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.			8A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINATOR 8B. DATE (If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).		
9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE					
VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES: The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.					
ETHNICITY		RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)		GENDER	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino		<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White		<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM					
Complete the form as follows:					
ITEM 1 Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be: A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election. B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member. C. Willing to serve if elected.					
ITEM 2 Enter the nominee's current address.					
ITEM 3 The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.					
ITEMS 3A & 3B The nominee must sign and date.					
ITEMS 8A & 8B The nominator must sign and date. (If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)					
ITEM 9 Completing this item is voluntary.					
ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 1, 2011.					
NOTE: The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.					
According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.					

Filing a Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Notice-of-Loss

To qualify for assistance under NAP, production losses or prevented planting must have occurred as a result of an eligible cause of loss. An eligible cause of loss is any of the following: damaging weather, such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, or excessive wind; or adverse natural occurrences, such as earthquake or flood; or a condition related to damaging weather or an adverse natural occurrence, such as excessive heat, disease or insect infestation. Wildlife damage and weeds are **not** considered eligible causes of loss under NAP.

A notice of loss must be provided for prevented planting claims, within 15 calendar days after the final planting date. For low yield claims, the earlier of the following: 15 calendar days after the damaging weather or disaster occurrence or date damage to the specific crop acreage is apparent to the producer for yield losses; or 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

If a Notice-of-Loss is filed after the established final planting date and the intent is to reseed to another crop intended for harvest, such as barley for grain, which is covered under crop insurance, a NAP payment cannot be received on the original failed crop.

Montana is not a double cropping state. If the intent is to destroy the crop, summer fallow it, or reseed to another crop **not** intended for harvest, representative strips must be left in the field so that a loss adjuster can be sent out closer to normal harvest time to appraise the original seeded crop. In this situation, the original seeded crop would still be eligible for a payment.

Big Horn County FSA
724 West 3rd St.
Hardin, MT 59034



PRESORTED
STANDARD U.S.
POSTAGE PAID
Bozeman, MT 59715
PERMIT #54

Current USDA Settlements and Non-Judicial Claims Process:

Native American Farmers & Ranchers Settlement Agreement (Keepseagle)

If you are a Native American who was denied a Farm Loan or Loan Servicing by the USDA between Jan. 1, 1981 and Nov. 24, 1999, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. To request a Claims Package or for more information, call 1-888-233-5506 or visit www.IndianFarmClass.com.

Non-Judicial Claims Process for Hispanic & Women Farmers & Ranchers

If you believe that USDA improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov.

African American Farmers Settlement Agreement (Pigford II)

If you are an African-American farmer who (a) submitted a request to file a late claim on or between Oct. 13, 1999 and June 18, 2008, under the 1999 USDA settlement in the earlier class action known as Pigford v. Glickman ("Pigford"), and (b) who did not receive a merits determination of their discrimination claim, you may be eligible for benefits from a Class Action Settlement. For more information, call 1-866-950-5547 or 1-866-472-7826 or visit www.blackfarmerscase.com.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.